

Message Text

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ORIGIN EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ONY-00 /013 R

DRAFTED BY EA/VLC:JJOHNSON/FMLC
APPROVED BY EA:WGLEYSTEEN
EA/VLC:TMCARNEY
DESIRED DISTRIBUTION
EA ONLY

-----125811 121006Z /11
R 120038Z JAN 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 008276

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS:EAID, PDIP, EAGR, SWEL, LA, US

SUBJECT: LAO APPEAL FOR U.S. FOOD AID

REF: STATE 4304 AND PREVIOUS

1. AS NOTED REFTEL, DEPARTMENT IS NOW CONSIDERING QUESTION OF WHETHER FOOD ASSISTANCE TO LAOS IS FEASIBLE IN RESPONSE TO LAO APPEAL. IT IS NOT POSSIBLE TO PREDICT AT THIS TIME WHEN WE MAY HAVE DECISION ON THIS SUBJECT. IF LAO INQUIRE, YOU MAY REPLY THAT DEPARTMENT HAS RECEIVED LAO FOREIGN MINISTER'S MESSAGE AND IS STUDYING MATTER.
2. IN MEANTIME, WE REQUEST ANY INFORMATION EMBASSY MAY HAVE ON FOLLOWING QUESTIONS RAISED IN DEPARTMENT'S IN-HOUSE DISCUSSIONS OF SUBJECT:
 - A. DOES EMBASSY KNOW IF UNDP/WFP (OR UNICEF) PLANS TO OVERSEE DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM FOR AID ALREADY PROMISED FROM
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SOME STATES? IS UNDP/WFP CURRENTLY IMPORTING FOOD, AND, IF SO, HOW? HOW DOES UNDP/WFP OVERSEE ANY DISTRIBUTION OF FOOD ASSISTANCE THEY GIVE IN LAOS?

B. REQUEST EMBASSY PROVIDE ANY INFORMATION IT HAS ON

WHICH COUNTRIES AND AGENCIES WILL BE GIVING FOOD ASSISTANCE

TO LAOS IN 1978 AND IN WHAT AMOUNTS? (WE ARE PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN WHAT ASEAN COUNTRIES ARE DOING.)

C. HAVE THERE BEEN ANY RECENT DOCUMENTED REPORTS FROM INTERNATIONAL AGENCY SOURCES (WHO, UNICEF, ETC.) ON INCREASING MALNUTRITION/STARVATION IN LAOS?

D. BELLMON AMENDMENT TO P.L. 480 PRECLUDES PROVISION OF TITLE I OR TITLE II ASSISTANCE EXCEPT UPON DETERMINATION BY SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE THAT (1) ADEQUATE STORAGE FACILITIES ARE AVAILABLE IN RECIPIENT COUNTRY AT TIME OF EXPORTATION OF COMMODITY TO PREVENT SPOILAGE OR WASTE OF COMMODITY, AND (2) DISTRIBUTION OF COMMODITY WILL NOT RESULT IN SUBSTANTIAL DISINCENTIVE TO DOMESTIC PRODUCTION. DEPARTMENT ASSUMES THAT, IN SITUATION DESCRIBED VIENTIANE 20, LATTER DETERMINATION IS NO PROBLEM. WOULD APPRECIATE EMBASSY'S ESTIMATE OF WHETHER ADEQUATE STORAGE FACILITIES EXIST IN LAOS FOR AMOUNT OF GRAIN LAO MAY RECEIVE IN AID THIS YEAR TO MEET BASIC NEEDS.

E. DOES EMBASSY HAVE ANY INFORMATION ON WHETHER ANY AMERICAN VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATIONS HAVE IN-COUNTRY FOOD ASSISTANCE PROJECTS?

3. FYI. DEPARTMENT HAS MADE NO REPEAT NO DETERMINATION ON POSSIBLE RESPONSE TO LAO APPEAL. SINCE ISSUE IS SENSITIVE
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ONE, DEPARTMENT RELIES ON EMBASSY'S JUDGMENT WHETHER ABOVE QUESTIONS CAN BE PUT TO VIENTIANE SOURCES WITHOUT UNDULY RAISING EXPECTATIONS LOCALLY ABOUT FUTURE U.S. ASSISTANCE. IF NOT, PLEASE GIVE US YOUR OWN BEST ANSWERS. END. FYI.
CHRISTOPHER

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